109TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION

S. 547

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for employer retirement savings accounts, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

March 8, 2005

Mr. Thomas (for himself and Mr. Kyl) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for employer retirement savings accounts, and for other purposes.

- 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
- 2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
- 3 SECTION 1. EMPLOYER RETIREMENT SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.
- 4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart A of part 1 of subchapter
- 5 D of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is
- 6 amended by inserting after section 401 the following new
- 7 section:
- 8 "SEC. 401A. EMPLOYER RETIREMENT SAVINGS ACCOUNTS.
- 9 "(a) In General.—A defined contribution plan shall
- 10 not fail to meet the requirements of section 401(a) merely

1	because the plan includes an employer retirement savings
2	account arrangement.
3	"(b) Employer Retirement Savings Account
4	Arrangement.—An employer retirement savings account
5	arrangement is any arrangement which is part of a plan
6	which meets the requirements of section 401(a)—
7	"(1) under which a covered employee may elect
8	to have the employer make payments as contribu-
9	tions to a trust under the plan on behalf of the em-
10	ployee, or to the employee directly in cash,
11	"(2) under which amounts held by the trust
12	which are attributable to employer contributions
13	made pursuant to the employee's election—
14	"(A) may not be distributable to partici-
15	pants or other beneficiaries earlier than—
16	"(i) severance from employment,
17	death, or disability,
18	"(ii) an event described in subsection
19	(g),
20	"(iii) the attainment of age 59, or
21	"(iv) upon hardship of the employee,
22	and
23	"(B) will not be distributable merely by
24	reason of the completion of a stated period of

1	participation or the lapse of a fixed number of
2	years,
3	"(3) which provides that an employee's right to
4	the employee's accrued benefit derived from em-
5	ployer contributions made to the trust pursuant to
6	the employee's election is nonforfeitable, and
7	"(4) which does not require, as a condition of
8	participation in the arrangement, that an employee
9	complete a period of service with the employer (or
10	employers) maintaining the plan extending beyond
11	the period permitted under section 410(a)(1) (deter-
12	mined without regard to subparagraph (B)(i) there-
13	of).
14	"(c) Application of Nondiscrimination Stand-
15	ARDS.—
16	"(1) Contribution percentage require-
17	MENT.—An arrangement shall not be treated as an
18	employer retirement savings account arrangement
19	for any plan year unless—
20	"(A) the contribution percentage for eligi-
21	ble highly compensated employees for the plan
22	year does not exceed 200 percent of such per-
23	centage for all other eligible employees for the
24	preceding plan year, or

1	"(B) the contribution percentage of non-
2	highly compensated employees for the preceding
3	plan year exceeded 6 percent.
4	"(2) Alternative methods of meeting
5	NONDISCRIMINATION REQUIREMENTS.—
6	"(A) IN GENERAL.—An arrangement shall
7	be treated as meeting the requirements of para-
8	graph (1)(A) if such arrangement—
9	"(i) meets the contribution require-
10	ments of subparagraph (B), and
11	"(ii) meets the notice requirements of
12	subparagraph (D).
13	"(B) Contribution requirement.—The
14	requirements of this subparagraph are met if,
15	under the arrangement, the employer is re-
16	quired to make contributions to a defined con-
17	tribution plan on behalf of each eligible em-
18	ployee who is not a highly compensated em-
19	ployee in an amount equal to at least 3 percent
20	of the employee's compensation. For purposes
21	of this subparagraph, elective deferrals and em-
22	ployee contributions shall not be taken into ac-
23	count in determining the amount of contribu-
24	tions the employer makes to the plan.

1	"(C) Special rules for matching con-
2	TRIBUTIONS.—
3	"(i) IN GENERAL.—If an employer
4	takes matching contributions into account
5	for purposes of subparagraph (B), the re-
6	quirements of such subparagraph shall be
7	treated as met only if the matching con-
8	tributions on behalf of each employee who
9	is not a highly compensated employee are
10	equal to 50 percent of the elective deferrals
11	of the employee to the extent that such
12	elective deferrals do not exceed 6 percent
13	of the employee's compensation.
14	"(ii) Alternative plan designs.—
15	If the rate of any matching contribution
16	with respect to any rate of elective deferral
17	is not equal to the percentage required
18	under clause (i), an arrangement shall not
19	be treated as failing to meet the require-
20	ments of clause (i) if—
21	"(I) the rate of an employer's
22	matching contribution does not in-
23	crease as an employee's rate of elec-
24	tive contributions increases, and

1	"(II) the aggregate amount of
2	matching contributions at such rate of
3	elective contribution is at least equal
4	to the aggregate amount of matching
5	contributions which would be made if
6	matching contributions were made on
7	the basis of the percentages described
8	in clause (i).
9	"(iii) Rate for highly com-
10	PENSATED EMPLOYEES.—The require-
11	ments of this subparagraph are not met if,
12	under the arrangement, the rate of match-
13	ing contribution with respect to any elec-
14	tive deferral of a highly compensated em-
15	ployee at any rate of elective deferral is
16	greater than that with respect to an em-
17	ployee who is not a highly compensated
18	employee.
19	"(D) Notice requirement.—An ar-
20	rangement meets the requirements of this sub-
21	paragraph if, under the arrangement, each em-
22	ployee eligible to participate is, within a reason-

able period before any year, given written notice

of the employee's rights and obligations under

the arrangement which—

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1	"(i) is sufficiently accurate and com-
2	prehensive to apprise the employee of such
3	rights and obligations, and
4	"(ii) is written in a manner calculated
5	to be understood by the average employee
6	eligible to participate.
7	"(E) OTHER REQUIREMENTS.—
8	"(i) WITHDRAWAL AND VESTING RE-
9	STRICTIONS.—An arrangement shall not be
10	treated as meeting the requirements of
11	subparagraph (B) unless the requirements
12	of paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (b)
13	are met with respect to all employer con-
14	tributions (including matching contribu-
15	tions) taken into account in determining
16	whether the requirements of subparagraph
17	(B) are met.
18	"(ii) Social security and similar
19	CONTRIBUTIONS NOT TAKEN INTO AC-
20	COUNT.—An arrangement shall not be
21	treated as meeting the requirements of
22	subparagraph (B) unless such require-
23	ments are met without regard to section

401(l), and, for purposes of section 401(l),

1	employer contributions under subpara-
2	graph (B) shall not be taken into account.
3	"(F) Other plans.—An arrangement
4	shall be treated as meeting the requirements of
5	subparagraph (B) if any other plan maintained
6	by the employer meets such requirements with
7	respect to employees eligible under the arrange-
8	ment.
9	"(3) Contribution percentage.—For pur-
10	poses of paragraph (1), the contribution percentage
11	for an eligible employee for a specified group of em-
12	ployees for a plan year shall be the average of the
13	ratios (calculated separately for each employee in
14	such group) of—
15	"(A) the sum of the elective deferrals,
16	matching contributions, employee contributions,
17	and qualified nonelective contributions paid
18	under the plan on behalf of each such employee
19	for such plan year, to
20	"(B) the employee's compensation for such
21	plan year.
22	"(4) Special rules.—For purposes of this
23	subsection—
24	"(A) Multiple arrangements.—If 2 or
25	more plans which include employer retirement

savings account arrangements are considered as 1 plan for purposes of section 401(a)(4) or 410(b), all such arrangements included in such plans shall be treated as 1 arrangement.

- "(B) EMPLOYEES IN MORE THAN 1 AR-RANGEMENT.—If any highly compensated employee is a participant under 2 or more employer retirement savings account arrangements of the employer, for purposes of determining the contribution percentage with respect to such employee, all such arrangements shall be treated as 1 arrangement.
- "(C) USE OF CURRENT YEAR.—An employer may elect to apply paragraph (1) (A) or (B) by using the plan year rather than the preceding plan year. An employer may change such an election only with the consent of the Secretary.
- "(D) 1ST PLAN YEAR.—In the case of the first plan year of any plan (other than a successor plan), the amount taken into account as the contribution percentage of nonhighly compensated employees for the preceding plan year shall be—

25 "(i) 3 percent, or

1 "(ii) if the employer makes an election 2 under this clause, the contribution percent-3 age of nonhighly compensated employees 4 determined for such first plan year.

> "(E) Special rule for early partici-PATION.—If an employer elects to apply section 410(b)(4)(B) in determining whether an employer retirement savings account arrangement meets the requirements of section 410(b)(1), the employer may, in determining whether the arrangement meets the requirements of this subsection, exclude from consideration all eligible employees (other than highly compensated employees) who have not met the minimum age and service requirements of section 410(a)(1)(A).

"(5) Exceptions.—

"(A) GOVERNMENTAL PLANS.—A governmental plan (within the meaning of section 414(d)) maintained by a State or local government or political subdivision thereof (or agency or instrumentality thereof) shall be treated as meeting the requirements of this subsection.

"(B) TAX EXEMPT PLANS.—

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1	"(i) In general.—A plan not de-
2	scribed in subparagraph (A) which is
3	maintained by an organization described in
4	section 501(c)(3) shall be treated as meet-
5	ing the requirements of this subsection for
6	any plan year if the plan provides that all
7	employees of such organization may elect
8	to have the employer make contributions of
9	more than \$200 pursuant to a salary re-
10	duction agreement if any employee of the
11	organization may elect to have the organi-
12	zation make contributions pursuant to
13	such agreement.
14	"(ii) Exception.—Clause (i) shall
15	not apply to any plan if under the plan—
16	"(I) matching contributions may
17	be made on behalf of any employee, or
18	"(II) an employee may make con-
19	tributions other than elective defer-
20	rals.
21	"(iii) Exclusion.—For purposes of
22	clause (i), there may be excluded any em-
23	ployee who is—

1	"(I) a participant in another em-
2	ployer retirement savings account ar-
3	rangement of the organization,
4	"(II) a nonresident alien de-
5	scribed in section 410(b)(3)(C), or
6	"(III) subject to the conditions
7	applicable under section 410(b)(4), a
8	student performing services described
9	in section 3121(b)(10) or an employee
10	who normally works less than 20
11	hours per week.
12	"(6) Coordination with subsection
13	(a)(4).—A cash or deferred arrangement shall be
14	treated as meeting the requirements of subsection
15	(a)(4) with respect to contributions if the require-
16	ments of paragraph (1) are met.
17	"(d) Other Requirements.—For purposes of this
18	section—
19	"(1) Benefits (other than matching con-
20	TRIBUTIONS) MUST NOT BE CONTINGENT ON ELEC-
21	TION TO DEFER.—An employer retirement savings
22	account arrangement of any employer shall not be
23	treated as such an arrangement if any other benefit
24	is conditioned (directly or indirectly) on the em-
25	ployee electing to have the employer make or not

- make contributions under the arrangement in lieu of receiving cash. The preceding sentence shall not apply to any matching contribution made by reason of such an election.
 - "(2) Coordination with other plans.—Any employer contribution made pursuant to an employer's election under an employer retirement savings account arrangement shall not be taken into account for purposes of determining whether any other plan meets the requirements of section 401(a) or 410(b). This paragraph shall not apply for purposes of determining whether a plan meets the average benefit requirement of section 410(b)(2)(A)(ii).
 - "(e) Definitions.—For purposes of this section—
 - "(1) ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEE.—The term 'eligible employee' means any employee who is eligible to benefit under the employer retirement savings account arrangement.
 - "(2) Highly compensated employee.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'highly compensated employee' has the meaning given such term by section 414(q).
- "(3) MATCHING CONTRIBUTION.—The term
 "matching contribution' means—

1	"(A) any employer contribution made to a
2	defined contribution plan on behalf of an em-
3	ployee on account of an employee contribution
4	made by such employee, and
5	"(B) any employer contribution made to a
6	defined contribution plan on behalf of an em-
7	ployee on account of an employee's elective de-
8	ferral.
9	"(4) Elective deferral.—The term 'elective
10	deferral' means any employer contribution described
11	in section $402(g)(3)$.
12	"(5) Qualified nonelective contribu-
13	TIONS.—The term 'qualified nonelective contribu-
14	tion' means any employer contribution (other than a
15	matching contribution) with respect to which—
16	"(A) the employee may not elect to have
17	the contribution paid to the employee in cash
18	instead of being contributed to the plan, and
19	"(B) the requirements of paragraphs (2)
20	and (3) of subsection (b) are met.
21	"(6) Compensation.—The term 'compensa-
22	tion' has the meaning given such term by section
23	414(s).
24	"(f) Arrangement Not Disqualified If Excess
25	Contributions Distributed.—

1	"(1) In General.—An employer retirement
2	savings account arrangement shall not be treated as
3	failing to meet the requirements of subsection
4	(c)(1)(A) for any plan year if, before the close of the
5	following plan year—
6	"(A) the amount of the excess contribu-
7	tions for such plan year (and any income allo-
8	cable to such contributions) is distributed, or
9	"(B) to the extent provided in regulations,
10	the employee elects to treat the amount of the
11	excess contributions as an amount distributed
12	to the employee and then contributed by the
13	employee to the plan.
14	Any distribution of excess contributions (and in-
15	come) may be made without regard to any other pro-
16	vision of law.
17	"(2) Excess contributions.—For purposes
18	of paragraph (1), the term 'excess contributions'
19	means, with respect to any plan year, the excess
20	of—
21	"(A) the aggregate amount of employer
22	contributions actually paid over to the trust on
23	behalf of highly compensated employees for
24	such plan year, over

- tributions permitted under the limitations of subsection (c)(1)(A) (determined by reducing contributions made on behalf of highly compensated employees in order of the contribution percentages beginning with the highest of such percentages).
 - "(3) METHOD OF DISTRIBUTING EXCESS CONTRIBUTIONS.—Any distribution of the excess contributions for any plan year shall be made to highly compensated employees on the basis of the amount of contributions by, or on behalf of, each of such employees.
 - "(4) Additional tax under section 72(t) NOT TO APPLY.—No tax shall be imposed under section 72(t) on any amount required to be distributed under this subsection.
 - "(5) TREATMENT OF MATCHING CONTRIBU-TIONS FORFEITED BY REASON OF EXCESS DEFER-RAL OR CONTRIBUTION.—For purposes of subsection (b)(3), a matching contribution shall not be treated as forfeitable merely because such contribution is forfeitable if the contribution to which the matching contribution relates is treated as an excess contribu-

1	tion under paragraph (2) or an excess deferral under
2	section $402(g)(2)(A)$.
3	"(6) Cross reference.—For excise tax on
4	certain excess contributions, see section 4979.
5	"(g) Distributions Upon Termination of
6	Plan.—
7	"(1) In general.—An event described in this
8	subsection is the termination of the plan without es-
9	tablishment or maintenance of another defined con-
10	tribution plan (other than an employee stock owner-
11	ship plan as defined in section $4975(e)(7)$).
12	"(2) Distributions must be lump sum dis-
13	TRIBUTIONS.—
14	"(A) In General.—A termination shall
15	not be treated as described in paragraph (1)
16	with respect to any employee unless the em-
17	ployee receives a lump sum distribution by rea-
18	son of the termination.
19	"(B) Lump-sum distribution.—For pur-
20	poses of this paragraph, the term 'lump-sum
21	distribution' has the meaning given such term
22	by section 402(e)(4)(D) (without regard to sub-
23	clauses (I), (III), (III), and (IV) of clause (i)
24	thereof). Such term includes a distribution of
25	an annuity contract from—

1	"(i) a trust which forms a part of a
2	plan described in section 401(a) and which
3	is exempt from tax under section 501(a),
4	or

5 "(ii) an annuity plan described in sec-6 tion 403(a).

"(h) SPECIAL RULES FOR SMALL EMPLOYERS.—

- "(1) IN GENERAL.—An arrangement maintained by an eligible employer shall not fail to meet the requirements of this section merely because contributions under the arrangement on behalf of any employee are made to an individual retirement plan (as defined under section 7701(a)(37)) established on behalf of the employee.
- "(2) ELIGIBLE EMPLOYER.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the term 'eligible employer' means, with respect to any year, an employer which had no more than 10 employees who received at least \$5,000 of compensation from the employer for the preceding year. An eligible employer who establishes and maintains an arrangement under this subsection for 1 or more years and who fails to be an eligible employer for any subsequent year shall be treated as an eligible employer for the 2 years following the last year the employer was an eligible employer. If

1	such failure is due to any acquisition, disposition, or
2	similar transaction involving an eligible employer,
3	the preceding sentence shall not apply.
4	"(i) Regulations.—The Secretary shall prescribe
5	such regulations as may be necessary to carry out the pur-
6	poses of this section, including regulations permitting ap-
7	propriate aggregation of plans and contributions.
8	"(j) Transition Rules.—
9	"(1) DEEMED ERSAS.—Any arrangement
10	which, as of December 31, 2005—
11	"(A) is part of a plan meeting the require-
12	ments of section 401(a), and
13	"(B) is—
14	"(i) a qualified cash or deferred ar-
15	rangement (as defined in section
16	401(k)(2)), or
17	"(ii) subject to the requirements of
18	section 401(m),
19	shall be treated as an employer retirement savings
20	account arrangement and subject to the require-
21	ments of this title applicable to such an arrangement
22	for plan years beginning after December 31, 2005.
23	"(2) Electable ersas.—
24	"(A) IN GENERAL.—If an employer makes
25	an election under this paragraph with respect to

1	any applicable arrangement, such arrangement
2	shall be treated as an employer retirement sav-
3	ings account arrangement and subject to the re-
4	quirements of this title applicable to such an
5	arrangement for plan years beginning after De-
6	cember 31, 2005.
7	"(B) Applicable arrangement.—For
8	purposes of subparagraph (A), the term 'appli-
9	cable arrangement' means an arrangement
10	which, as of December 31, 2005, is—
11	"(i) an arrangement under which
12	amounts are contributed by an individual's
13	employer for an annuity contract described
14	in section 403(b),
15	"(ii) an eligible deferred compensation
16	plan (within the meaning of section
17	457(b)) maintained by an eligible employer
18	described in section 457(e)(1)(A),
19	"(iii) a simplified employee pension
20	(within the meaning of section 408(k)) for
21	which an election is in effect under para-
22	graph (6) thereof, or
23	"(iv) a simple retirement account
24	(within the meaning of section 408(p).".

1	(b) Elective Deferrals.—Section 402 of such
2	Code is amended—
3	(1) in subsection (e)(3), by inserting ", an em-
4	ployer retirement savings account arrangement (as
5	defined in section 401A(b))," after "section
6	401(k)(2))", and
7	(2) in subsection (g)(3)(A), by inserting ", or
8	an employer retirement savings account arrangement
9	(as defined in section 401A(b))," before "to the ex-
10	tent".
11	(c) TERMINATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO OTHER
12	Plans.—
13	(1) 401(k) Plans.—Section 401(k) of such
14	Code is amended by adding at the end the following
15	new paragraph:
16	"(13) Termination.—This subsection shall not
17	apply to any plan year beginning after December 31,
18	2005.".
19	(2) 403(b) ANNUITY CONTRACTS.—Section
20	403(b) of such Code is amended by adding at the
21	end the following new paragraph:
22	"(14) Termination.—No elective deferral (as
23	defined in section 402(g)(3)) may be contributed
24	under this subsection by an employer, and no
25	amount may be transferred under an eligible roll-

- over, for an annuity contract after December 31, 2006.".
- 3 (3) GOVERNMENTAL 457 PLANS.—Section 457 4 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the
- 5 following new subsection:
- 6 "(h) Termination.—No amount may be deferred
- 7 under this subsection under a plan maintained by an eligi-
- 8 ble employer described in subsection (e)(1)(A), and no
- 9 amount may be transferred under an eligible rollover to
- 10 an eligible deferred compensation plan maintained by such
- 11 an employer, after December 31, 2006.".
- 12 (4) SARSEPS.—Subparagraph (H) of section
- 13 408(k)(6) of such Code is amended by adding at the
- end the following new sentence: "No amount may be
- contributed under this paragraph to a simplified em-
- ployee pension by an employer, and no amount may
- 17 be transferred to a simplified employee pension
- maintained under this paragraph under an eligible
- rollover, after December 31, 2006.".
- 20 (5) SIMPLE IRAS.—Section 408(p) of such Code
- 21 is amended by adding at the end the following new
- paragraph:
- 23 "(11) TERMINATION.—No amount may be con-
- tributed under this paragraph to a simple retirement
- account after December 31, 2006.".

1 (d) Other Conforming Changes.—

2	(1) Section 401 of such Code is amended by
3	striking subsection (m).
4	(2) Section 7701(j) of such Code (relating to
5	tax treatment of Federal Thrift Savings Fund) is
6	amended—
7	(A) in paragraph (1)(C), by striking "sec-
8	tion 401(k)(4)(B)" and inserting "section
9	401A(d)(1)", and
10	(B) in paragraph (2), by striking "section
11	401(k)" and inserting "section 401A".
12	(3) The Secretary of the Treasury shall, not
13	later than 90 days after the date of the enactment
14	of this Act, submit such technical and other con-
15	forming changes as are necessary to carry out the
16	amendments made by this section.
17	(e) Clerical Amendment.—The table of sections
18	for subpart A of part 1 of subchapter D of chapter 1 of
19	such Code is amended by inserting after the item relating
20	to section 401 the following new item:
	"Sec. 401A. Employer Retirement Savings Accounts.".
21	(f) Effective Date.—The amendments made by
22	this section shall apply to years beginning after December
23	31, 2005.
24	(g) Provisions Relating to Plan Amend-
25	MENTS.—

1	(1) In general.—If this subsection applies to
2	any plan or contract amendment—
3	(A) such plan or contract shall be treated
4	as being operated in accordance with the terms
5	of the plan during the period described in para-
6	graph $(2)(C)(i)$, and
7	(B) except as provided by the Secretary of
8	the Treasury, such plan shall not fail to meet
9	the requirements of section 401A of the Inter-
10	nal Revenue Code of 1986 by reason of such
11	amendment.
12	(2) Amendments to which section ap-
13	PLIES.—
14	(A) In general.—This subsection shall
15	apply to any amendment to any plan or annuity
16	contract which is made—
17	(i) pursuant to any amendment made
18	by this section, or pursuant to any regula-
19	tion issued by the Secretary of the Treas-
20	ury or the Secretary of Labor under this
2021	ury or the Secretary of Labor under this section, and
	· ·
21	section, and

1	(B) GOVERNMENTAL PLAN.—In the case
2	of a governmental plan (as defined in section
3	414(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986),
4	subparagraph (A) shall be applied by sub-
5	stituting "2009" for "2007".
6	(C) Conditions.—This subsection shall
7	not apply to any amendment unless—
8	(i) during the period—
9	(I) beginning on the date the leg-
10	islative or regulatory amendment de-
11	scribed in subparagraph (A)(i) takes
12	effect (or in the case of a plan or con-
13	tract amendment not required by such
14	legislative or regulatory amendment,
15	the effective date specified by the
16	plan), and
17	(II) ending on the date described
18	in subparagraph (A)(ii) (or, if earlier,
19	the date the plan or contract amend-
20	ment is adopted), the plan or contract
21	is operated as if such plan or contract
22	amendment were in effect; and
23	(ii) such plan or contract amendment
24	applies retroactively for such period.